

DEC 16 1993

N.C. STATE LIBRARY
Raleigh
**AN ASSESSMENT OF HEALTH SERVICE NEEDS FOR THE
HISPANIC/LATINO COMMUNITY IN NORTH CAROLINA****Executive Summary**

This assessment identified available health-related services and the major barriers to obtaining adequate health care for Hispanics/Latinos in North Carolina. The survey assessed methods used to reach Hispanics/Latinos and the general population, the availability of data on ethnicity, perceived health service needs for Hispanics/Latinos, and recommended strategies to overcome those needs.

The sample included 35 counties that had: 1) 700 or more Hispanics/Latinos according to the Census; 2) a percentage of Hispanics/Latinos greater than the state average of 1.2%; and/or 3) a high number of migrant farmworkers (n=500 to 3500). For data analyses, sections of the questionnaire were treated as scales; mean scores were examined for linguistic/cultural methods and needs, and for physical access methods and needs. Responses were also examined for the individual variables. Comparisons were made among types of agencies, and between administrators and providers for the local health departments. Responses to the items on involving consumers in program planning were transcribed and grouped using simple content analysis.

The sample included 35 local health departments, 10 community health centers, and 17 community-based organizations. An additional 57 agencies were contacted for the Resource Directory and for the listing of Innovative Services. The community organizations had a higher mean for the linguistic and cultural methods to serve Hispanics than did the local health departments and community health centers. For perceived needs in this area, the community health centers had the highest mean. The community organizations had a lower mean for methods to increase access than did the local health departments and community health centers. For the local health departments, the providers had a much higher mean than the administrators for perceived need for linguistic and cultural methods. Providers also had a higher mean for methods used to increase access, and for perceived need to increase access.

Most organizations felt that more help was needed with overcoming language barriers. The most common method for interpretation was encouraging patients to bring their own interpreter. Most local health departments preferred to hire bilingual people, because language training had limited effect in the time allotted for it. Regarding culturally-based care, most health agencies had not really considered it, while most community organizations felt more help was needed in that area. Transportation was seen as a particular need for Hispanics by many local health departments and most community health centers and community organizations.